



# **Environmental Law Making and Oversight for Sustainable Development A guide for Legislators**

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Environmental law-making and oversight for sustainable development: A guide for legislators.

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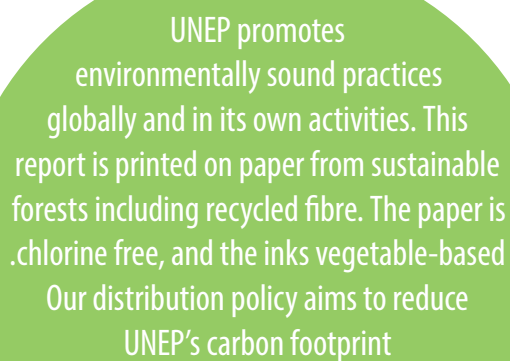
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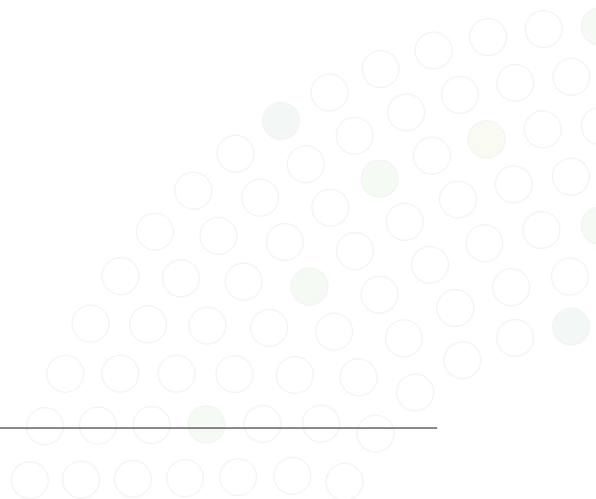
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## Five actions and talking points for legislators

1. Learn about the Sustainable Development Goals, Paris Agreement on Climate Change, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and other important 'post-2015' global commitments concerning the environment and sustainable development.

**"... for the first time in history, all countries share a common, universal development agenda. It acknowledges that nations depend on one another and must work together to solve the world's most critical challenges. Its underlying motivation is to transform our world, in the way we live, work and do business."**

**Achim Steiner, UNDP Administrator, Speech at a meeting with Danish Ambassadors, 21.08. 2017**

**"... social and economic development depends on the sustainable management of our planet's natural resources. We are therefore determined to conserve and sustainably use oceans and seas, freshwater resources, ... forests, mountains and drylands and to protect biodiversity, ecosystems and wildlife."**

**UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/70/1 – Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 21.10.2015**

**"...the reality is that many policy-makers at national or local level are unaware of decisions taken at the global level. Global policy debates and their outcomes are often disconnected from national development plans and poverty reduction strategies. Overcoming this 'implementation gap' poses a significant challenge."**

**CAFOD, Report on "Lessons for implementation of post-2015", 2015**

2. Identify, and engage with, the government institutions and officials responsible for implementing the post-2015 global commitments concerning the environment and sustainable development.

**"There is no 'Plan B' because we do not have a 'Planet B'. We have to work and galvanise our action."**

**Ban Ki-Moon, UN Secretary General, Comment at People's Climate March, 21.09.2014**

**"The uncertain global economic outlook, the adverse impact of climate change and the humanitarian crisis means that the task ahead for us to implement the 2030 Goals is all the more daunting. The stark reality calls for immediate collective action."**

**Prime Minister Meltek Sato Kilman Livtuvanu, Vanuatu, Statement at UN General Assembly, 30.09.2015**

**"The big task is that it's not enough to have the institutional systems in place, the SDGS are about implementation. What do you prioritise? How do you budget in such a way that those that are in the frontline are now in the position of benefiting from implementation and services? ... now the institutions are in place, how do we prioritise, plan properly and implement so that we leave no one behind. The next 13 years is going to tell us how successful we are."**

**Namhla Mniki-Mangaliso, Director of Africa Monitor, Interview with Commonwealth Foundation, 27.03.2017**

3. Request official reports or testimony from government institutions and officials, on plans and progress towards implementation of the post-2015 global commitments concerning the environment and sustainable development. Call on parliament to endorse or reaffirm commitments to the post-2015 commitments, and develop evidence-based strategies for effective national implementation.



**"As parliamentarians, we must support efforts to reach the new goals in ways that respect each country's national specificities. Our responsibility is clear: to hold governments accountable for the goals they have subscribed to, and to make sure that enabling laws are passed and budgets adopted."**

**Inter-Parliamentary Union, Hanoi Declaration on the SDGs: Turning Words into Action, 01.04.2015**

**"... we still are faced with absolute poverty, huge unemployment issues and huge problems with governance. The SDG framework provides an opportunity within which that can change, but that's not going to change by having the right policies in place, it's going to change by implementation."**

**Helen Clark, UNDP Administrator, Fourth World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, 2015**

4. Ensure that legislation and parliamentary decisions across all topic areas recognise the valuable, and sometimes irreplaceable, contributions of the environment to human wellbeing and development. Review alignment between national legislation and policies, and the post-2015 global commitments concerning the environment and sustainable development.

**"Sustainable development can only become a reality when biodiversity and ecosystems are healthy and resilient. Without addressing the critical linkage between ecosystems and sustainable development, our collective efforts will be in vain"**

**Cristiana Paşca Palmer, Convention on Biological Diversity Executive Secretary, Statement for UN Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14, 15–16.02.2017**

**"There's one issue that will defined the contours of this century more dramatically than any other, and that is the urgent and growing threat of climate change."**

**President Barack Obama, United States of America, Speech at UN Climate Change Summit, 23.09.2014**

**"The modernization that we pursue is one characterized by harmonious coexistence between man and nature."**

**"We must realize that lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets and act on this understanding, implement our fundamental national policy of conserving resources and protecting the environment, and cherish the environment as we cherish our own lives."**

**President Xi Jinping, China, Speech at 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, 18.10.2017**

5. Ensure that national budgets allocate sufficient resources to governance of the environment, recognising its role as valuable national asset and the foundation of human health, wealth and wellbeing.

**"Watersheds, forests, fisheries, coral reefs, soils, and all natural resources, ecosystems and biodiversity constitute our vital natural capital and are therefore central to long-term human well-being, and therefore must be protected from overuse and degradation and, where necessary, must be restored and enhanced."**

**The Gaborone Declaration for Sustainability in Africa, 25.05.2012**

**"When we invest in natural capital we are working towards protecting against natural hazards, adapting to climate change, increasing sustainable development, adding to human health and food security."**

**Pavan Sukdev, Founder and CEO of GIST Advisory, Speech at GLOBE Natural Capital Legislation Summit, 2013**

6. Convene or support inclusive platforms for engagement with civil society, business, cities, local governments, academia, indigenous peoples, and marginalised communities and groups—to keep public focus on the environment and on delivery of the post-2015 global commitments.

**“We are determined to mobilize the means required to implement this Agenda through a revitalised Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, based on a spirit of strengthened global solidarity, focussed in particular on the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable and with the participation of all countries, all stakeholders and all people.”**

**UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/70/1 – Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 21.10.2015**

**“Gender equality is the biggest transformer and enabler for achieving sustainable development”**

**Lakshmi Puri, UN Women Deputy Executive, Opening remarks at “A call to action for gender quality and women’s empowerment”, 17.05.2016**

**“The ratified Paris Agreement makes the transition to a low-carbon economy inevitable. The Sustainable Development Goals add to that a framework for developing our societies and economies. They turn all countries in the world into developing nations. As businesses around the world find their focus in the implications of this new framework, one thing has become crystal clear: the Paris Agreement and the SDGs will not be realised without the involvement of all state and non-state parties alike, especially the private sector.”**

**Peter Bakker, President and CEO of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), WBCSD online insight, 29.11.2016**



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